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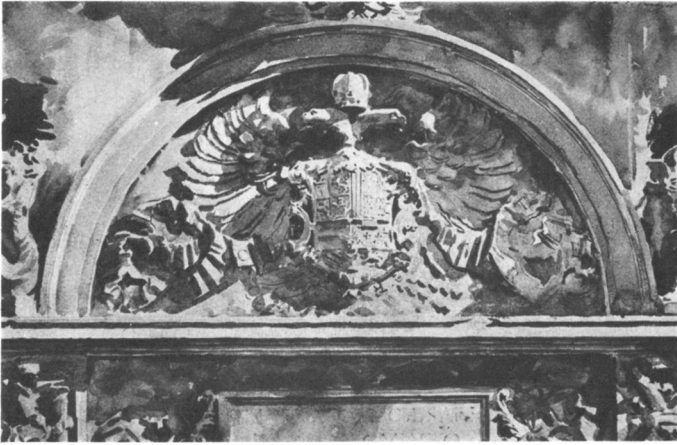
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of our Egyptian series, transported from the position at Saqqara where it was erected more than four thousand five hundred years ago, this tomb of Perneb must prove of the greatest interest through the manner in which it illustrates what is best and most characteristic among the constructive and decorative features of Memphite funerary art. A. M. L.

In portraiture he has been thought a profound psychologist, and though he has been inclined to deny any preoccupation with the souls of his sitters, he has undoubtedly felt the portrait painter's obligation to give their bodily presence, to render as solid objects a given head and figure, not to reduce them to mere visual aspects. In these sketches from the portfolio of a



ESCUTCHEON OF CHARLES V BY JOHN S. SARGENT

### THE SARGENT WATER-COLORS

THE ten water-color paintings by John Singer Sargent recently purchased by the Museum, and now on exhibition in Gallery 25, are admirably representative of one side of his art; not of his work in water-color merely, but of all that one may call the more irresponsible part of his production in whatever medium—the work that he does for himself alone, as he pleases to do it, without any consciousness of obligation to a public or of the necessity of making himself understood. Not the most self-sufficing and original of artists can achieve this entire independence in mural painting or in portraiture. Sargent is a many-sided man, so entirely in possession of his tools that he can do anything he chooses. In his mural decorations he deals in many and complicated meanings which call for something like a libretto to explain them.

wandering painter we have the typical modern naturalist noting whatever chances to appeal to him; and the things appeal to him, one feels, not for what they are or what they mean, but almost solely for how they look. Indeed, the interest in appearances, in the look of things, is so great that one suspects an unconscious avoidance of subjects that possess any other interest. If you wish to paint the way in which a building, under sunlight, tells against the sky or reflects itself in the water, it is better to choose a building that has no historical or architectural import which might distract your own attention and would surely distract that of your public. You will not paint the Ducal Palace but some nameless, mouldering bit of wall upon an unknown canal.

A capital illustration of this direction of the attention is the extraordinarily brilliant sketch of the Escutcheon of Charles V over some Spanish doorway. An architect

who had the same amount of time to give to it would have dwelt upon the disposition of it as ornament in the arched space of the tympanum or perhaps upon the projection and profile of the mouldings. A historian would have been interested in the heraldry as showing the concentration

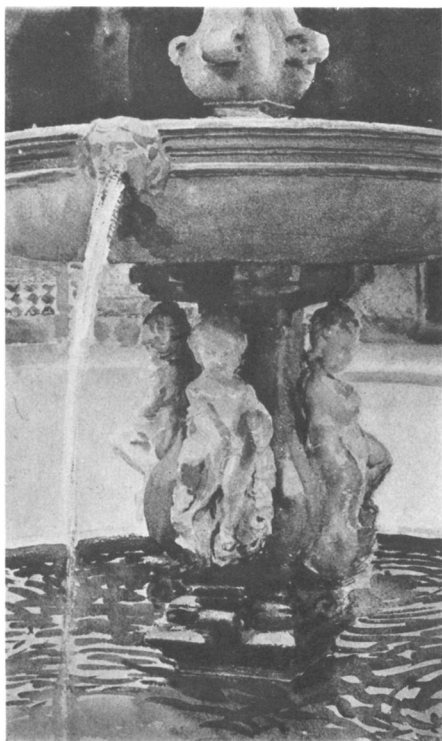
of power in the hands of one person who was at once Roman Emperor, King of Spain, and duke and count of how many provinces. Sargent, the pure painter, has seen the sun striking across it, has noted the glitter of light on the projecting bosses, the sharp forms of blue shadows, the warm reflections; and with astonishing rapidity and simplicity of means has so set down these things as to create an absolute illusion. The thing is there before you and you feel sure that by going a little closer you can make out the exact forms that have caused this confusion of light and shade. If you try it, you will discover that you see less than at a distance, that the forms are not there. You cannot make out a single bearing on the shield or be certain of the shape of the shield itself or of more than that there is a shield and a double-headed eagle that supports it.

If one has not quite this puzzle in some of the other sketches it is because the artist has avoided subjects which tempt one to examination of the details. You care no more for the boat itself in *Idle Sails* than the artist did and are content to accept his record of the white of the sails and the pale blue of the sky and water as

the only things of any interest. You may idly wonder what are the exact objects that cause the perplexing and entertaining confusion of the *Giudecca*, but you do not really care. The visual image is enough. In the *Spanish Fountain* you get the glitter of water and the beautiful

color of worn and stained marble, and you are content to believe that the sculpture is of no importance as sculpture.

It is instructive to compare these water-colors with those on the opposite wall by Winslow Homer, to note a strong superficial resemblance in the work of the two men, and to observe the underlying divergence. Homer is an acute observer also and records his observations in a manner as vigorous and direct as that of Sargent, if with less manual dexterity. But with Homer you feel that he is moved by the thing itself as it is, not merely by the aspect of it. A storm-cloud is a storm-cloud, with a



SPANISH FOUNTAIN  
BY JOHN S. SARGENT

terrible force of wind in it, not merely a gray-blue space of a certain shape. A palm tree is a palm tree with all its elasticity and vigor of growth. You will get none of this feeling from Sargent—he does not mean you to get it. He is an eye and a hand. He seems to say: "I assure you this is the way things really look if you know how to see. These strange blots and touches of mine truly represent the colors and shapes that strike upon the retina. It is your mind that makes boats or stones or clouds or trees out of them." And because his are perhaps the most

gifted and the most highly trained hand and eye now extant in the world you are quite content to forget with him, for the moment, that art has ever had anything else to say than, "This is the way things look."

Other men, or Sargent himself at another time, may give you other things to think of, but these things may be only hinted at and may be incapable of absolute realization. In these sketches you have the entire accomplishment of all that was

exhibition as soon as possible what we now have, without waiting for the arrival of the other acquisitions. The pieces shown this month consist of three heads, of which two are exceptionally fine Roman portraits of the first and third centuries A. D. respectively, and one is a charming work of the late Greek period.

#### ROMAN PORTRAIT OF THE FLAVIAN PERIOD

Roman portraiture can be said to have reached its height in the Flavian epoch



BOATS BY JOHN S. SARGENT

aimed at. In a quite literal sense they are complete and perfect—you cannot imagine them better done. And therefore they give one of the many kinds of pleasure that art may give us in well nigh its utmost attainable degree.

KENYON COX.

#### DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL ART RECENT ACCESSIONS

##### THREE MARBLE HEADS

CONTRARY to our usual custom, the purchases made in Europe for the Classical Department during 1915 will not all be exhibited together. Only a few pieces have so far been received, and it is doubtful how soon the rest can be despatched with safety. It seemed advisable therefore to put on

(69-96 A. D.). Two opposite influences—the ultra-realism of the Republican epoch and the revival of Greek idealism during the Augustan period—were then successfully combined, and resulted in a series of portraits which show both an extraordinarily subtle observation of nature and a refined artistic sense. The Museum already owns several good portraits dating from that period; but the one now acquired is the most important (fig. 1; height,  $13\frac{1}{8}$  in. [33.4 cm.]). It represents a rather homely man in middle age, with a round, somewhat fleshy face, and a kindly, genial expression. The face is wonderfully lifelike. The artist has succeeded in catching a momentary, but apparently wholly characteristic expression of his sitter, and has translated it into stone with such skill that the marble appears to live. This effect of a "speaking likeness" is obviously